

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

101 Monroe Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

April 16, 2008

Honorable Isiah Leggett  
County Executive  
101 Monroe Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett:

I am writing to convey the views of the BRAC Implementation Committee (BIC) on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the BRAC action at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) that was published on April 4, 2008. The Committee appreciates the positive nature of the Final EIS and believes the Navy gave careful consideration to concerns expressed by the BIC and the community at large. The Navy has recognized that it is a stakeholder in the community and has taken responsibility for significant impacts of the BRAC action.

Above all, the Committee appreciates the Navy's change of position regarding the applicability of the Defense Access Road (DAR) program to two projects necessitated by the BRAC action that will establish the world-class Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) in Bethesda. The NNMC Base Commander has acknowledged that traffic mitigation projects outside the NNMC fence are integral to the success of the BRAC-mandated mission to provide the finest care and treatment for our country's active and retired servicemen and service women. The Navy's newfound support for DAR certification for these projects – improving access to the Medical Center Metro station by constructing elevators and a pedestrian underpass from the east side of MD 355, and constructing turn lanes into the main NNMC gates from MD 355 – is a critical first step in a complex process that could lead to federal funding.

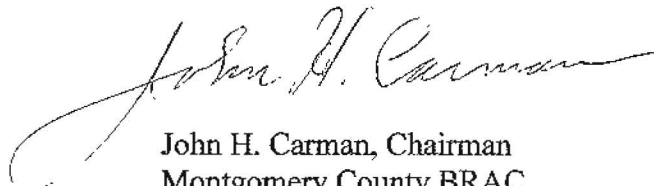
The Committee also appreciates that the Navy has taken steps to address housing and parking needs of patients on campus, and that the Navy intends new construction to be certified Silver according to the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Program. We await publication of the Master Plan to clarify the need and supply of housing and parking, and to provide specific information about a Transportation Management Plan (TMP). While the Committee appreciates the Navy's hiring a transportation coordinator, the Committee is concerned that the Final EIS did not include a site-specific TMP which is essential to help mitigate the increased traffic that will result from BRAC.

Finally, the Committee believes the Navy should reconsider the BIC recommendation to establish a formal and ongoing community relations liaison. BIC sees immense benefit to early establishment of such a liaison outside the purview of BIC whose charter ends when the BRAC construction is completed. The formal Navy-community liaison is a strategic link as the BRAC construction phase commences and serves the long-term interest and integration of BRAC into Bethesda. Such a liaison would provide contractor accountability and an avenue of ongoing communication with NNMC and its neighbors, especially as the Navy develops and implements specific plans to mitigate traffic impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Committee believes that the Montgomery County Government must work urgently and proactively with NNMC and all levels of government to fully fund and implement traffic mitigation projects that have been identified as worthy of DAR certification, as well as intersection upgrades, pedestrian path improvements, a feasibility study for a Beltway slip ramp, and a comprehensive area-wide transportation study. County residents are concerned that county and state efforts to mitigate the effects of the additional traffic will not be completed by the September 15, 2011 statutory deadline for the expanded medical center to be fully operational. Now that the Navy has completed its studies, the county – as the jurisdiction most immediately affected by the move – must seize the initiative.

Now that the NEPA process is nearing its end we must look forward to the eventual grand opening of the expanded Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, the centerpiece of military medicine in the National Capital Region. Like you, the BRAC Implementation Committee is proud that Montgomery County will be home to the world's finest military medical center. It is essential that the County takes the lead to ensure that patients, doctors and emergency vehicles will have ready access to the campus. We continue to stand ready to assist you in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John H. Carman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

John H. Carman, Chairman  
Montgomery County BRAC  
Implementation Committee

JHC/pa